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Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
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TO AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE
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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS:US, UK, IS, HR

SUBJECT: SUNDAY LONDON TIMES QUERIES

1. JOHN BARRY, MANAGING EDITOR, SUNDAY LONDON TIMES (SLT) CALLED DEPARTMENT FROM LONDON TO POSE CERTAIN QUESTIONS RE U.S. REACTIONS TO ALLEGATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS ON WEST BANK. BARRY SAID SLT IS DOING MAJOR ARTICLE FOR SEPT 18 ISSUE AS FOLLOW ON TO EARLIER ARTICLES. INCLUDED IN ARTICLE WILL BE SUBSTANCE OF NUMBER OF ICRC REPORTS. HE SAID ESSENCE OF LATEST SLT ARTICLE WILL BE TO CONFIRM IN LARGE PART EARLIER FINDINGS, PARTICULARLY AS REGARDS THE PAST, TO INDICATE THAT CONDITIONS HAVE IMPROVED AND TO SUGGEST THAT PERHAPS EARLIER ARTICLES WENT TOO FAR AS CONCERNS PRESENT SITUATION.

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2. FOLLOWING ARE QUESTIONS POSED BY BARRY AND OUR ANSWERS:

Q. CAN YOU CONFIRM THAT PRESIDENT CARTER RAISED THE QUESTION OF ISRAELI TORTURE OF ARAB PRISONERS WITH PRIME MINISTER BEGIN, AS IS CLAIMED BY A MAARIV ARTICLE?

A. YES, THIS SUBJECT WAS DISCUSSED DURING PRESIDENT

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CARTER'S TALKS WITH PRIME MINISTER BEGIN.

Q. HAS THE U.S. GOVERNMENT RECEIVED A MESSAGE FROM THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT WHICH REPORTED NO SYSTEMATIC TORTURE OF ARABS IN ISRAELI PRISONS, BASED ON AN INVESTIGATION WHICH PM BEGIN ORDERED AFTER HIS RETURN TO ISRAEL?

A. PRIME MINISTER BEGIN ASSURED PRESIDENT CARTER DURING THEIR MEETING THAT TORTURE IS CONTRARY TO OFFICIAL POLICY AND PROHIBITED BY LAW. HE SAID THE NEW GOVERNMENT WOULD REVIEW THE SITUATION AND CONFIRM THAT NO SUCH PRACTICES ARE CARRIED OUT. SUBSEQUENTLY, WE HAVE SEEN THE ASSURANCES REPORTED IN MAARIV THAT ORDERS HAVE BEEN ISSUED BY THE PRIME MINISTER PROHIBITING MISTREATMENT OF DETAINEES. WE WELCOME THIS ASSURANCE.

Q. WAS THE U.S. GOVERNMENT INFORMED OF THE ORDER PM BEGIN PUT OUT TO PRISON AUTHORITIES SAYING THAT ALTHOUGH TORTURE WAS NOT USED (AS A SYSTEMATIC TOOL), THERE SHOULD BE NO RELAXATION IN SEEING THAT IT CONTINUED NOT TO BE USED?

A. NO, BUT WE HAVE SEEN REPORTS TO THIS EFFECT AND WELCOME THEM.

Q. THE STATE DEPARTMENT SAID ON SEPTEMBER 14 THAT "THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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U.S. HAS LONG MADE CLEAR ITS SUPPORT FOR EFFORTS BY SUCH ORGANIZATIONS AS THE ICRC IN THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES". WHAT DOES "LONG MADE CLEAR" MEAN? WHEN WAS THE MATTER FIRST RAISED WITH THE ISRAELIS? HAS IT BEEN RAISED AGAIN WITH ISRAEL SINCE JUNE 19, 1977?

A. WE DO NOT NORMALLY GET INTO OUR DIPLOMATIC EXCHANGES AND I HAVE NOTHING TO ADD TO STATEMENT BY THE STATE DEPARTMENT'S PRESS SPOKESMAN.

Q. IN ANSWERING THE QUESTION TAKEN AT THE NOON BRIEFING ON SEPTEMBER 13, DID NOT THE U.S. GO FURTHER DELIBERATELY THAN ANSWERING SHOULD HAVE REQUIRED? DOES NOT THE FACT THAT STATE HAS GONE PUBLIC WITH ITS POSITION SHOW THAT IT IS NOT SATISFIED WITH THE ASSURANCES IT HAS RECEIVED FROM ISRAEL?

A. NO, WE DID NOT GO FURTHER IN OUR ANSWER THAN WE FELT THE QUESTION REQUIRED. WE WERE NOT TRYING TO INDICATE MORE THAN WE WERE SAYING. AS WE HAVE SAID, WE TAKE SERIOUSLY THE ANSWERS OF THE GOVERNMENT OF ISRAEL THAT THESE CHARGES ARE WITHOUT FOUNDATION. NEVERTHELESS,

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WE BELIEVE IT WOULD HELP LAY THESE CHARGES TO REST IF THERE WERE AN INVESTIGATION BY AN IMPARTIAL INTERNATIONAL BODY.

Q. THERE ARE REPORTS THAT THE U.S. CONSULATE IN EAST JERUSALEM IS INQUIRING ABOUT THE CONDITION OF WEST BANK ARABS. IS THE CONSULATE MAKING A CONCERTED EFFORT TO FIND OUT ABOUT THE TREATMENT OF WEST BANK DETAINEES, AS MAARIV HAS REPORTED?

IF SO, WHAT HAS BEEN FOUND OUT?

IF THE REPORT HAS NOT YET BEEN SUBMITTED, WHEN IS IT EXPECTED?
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A. ALL OF OUR POSTS OVERSEAS ARE CONCERNED WITH THE PRIORITY ISSUES OF THE ADMINISTRATION, INCLUDING HUMAN RIGHTS. I CANNOT COMMENT ON THE SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES OR REPORTING OF ANY ONE POST. I HAVE NOTHING MORE TO SAY ON THIS. VANCE

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Control Number: n/a
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Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
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Disposition History: n/a
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